

Term Project Final Deliverable

Due Date: Midnight May 8, 2012

SLIS 5960 Information Architecture

Spring 2012

University of North Texas

Conducted from the UNT Denton campus

Project: Website Prototype

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My project presentation consists of this deliverable and my working prototype (Website) at <https://sites.google.com/site/shystersleazyandslick/>

I. Introduction

In layman's terms, this is a working prototype of a Website for a **small law firm that practices Texas Criminal Law ("the small firm")**. It is composed of ten (10) seamlessly integrated Websites. It was built using *Google Site*.

I acknowledge the intricate "substantial knowledge of significant legal concepts and corresponding skills in criminal law" that a specialist must know "for purposes of certification examination." The exam outline is quite impressive. ("Exam specification for," n.d.) (McNeil, 2012)

The prototype is compartmentalized so that a small firm, for purposes of presenting itself to the public, can separate its practice into distinct parts and categories. This will allow users to *drill down* to material in depth, while reading as little as possible. This prototype is about as out-of-the-box as I could make it. Additional pages can be added as needed. It is a big step towards meeting the Internet advertising need for a small firm.

Assuming that a small firm wants to use Google Sites, the practices and procedures are set out so that one can see how the site was built. A brief look now at **Appendix 9, Sitemap with URLs of main pages**, and **Appendix 10, Parameters and Protocols**, would likely make this deliverable easier to follow.

The length of time allowed for this **prototype** was fifteen days. This class began on about January 17, 2012. I was involved in a working group of teammates and we submitted two deliverable, the first on March 13, 2012 and the second on April 17, 2012. On April 23, 2012 I was assigned the task of making a **prototype**. The due date of this deliverable was May 8, 2012. I submitted the work on day twelve (5/5/12).

II. My Background

As for my most recent education, I earned my MLIS from UNT on about May 14, 2010. I am in my last semester for my Graduate Academic Certificate in Digital Content Management. The other three people who were in my group prior to this prototype assignment are all graduate students at UNT.

The expertise and scholarship available to address the project is a culmination my MLIS experience at UNT. The digital knowledge and organization skills that I learned with UNT were essential to this project. Prior to this course I spent a lot of time building my Google Site skills and that was indispensable to this project. I have made other Websites with Google Sites before, each site enhancing my skills. I worked harder in this project, than any of my other Google Sites projects, in compartmentalizing content and presentation. This required more attention, and certainly more effort in a short period, than any other of my Google Sites projects.

I am including my *Information Architecture from SLIS 5960* as Appendix 11.

III. Need

The need that I am addressing is **Internet advertising** by a small firm that practices Texas Criminal Law. In addition to their regular MCLE, if these lawyers expect any court appointments, they have to be certified (pass a test) by the Texas Board of Legal Specialization as Criminal

Law Specialists. Most practicing lawyers use Westlaw or something similar. I do not want to elaborate on the overhead of a law firm, but I will say that it is higher than most people can imagine. This alone creates a budgetary dilemma for advertising on the Internet while simultaneously creating a need to advertise somehow. Also, very few lawyers have time to build Websites. A small firm simply could not put the necessary time into such a project, not to mention the Information Architecture skills involved. ("Continuing legal education," 2012) (*Texas board of, n.d.*) (Westlaw, 2011)

The need is significant. Having the need met, or not met, is likely to have a major effect on a small firm. The quality of the prototype is not a good comparison to more expensive Website building tools. There is a tradeoff of quality.

IV. Limitations and explanations

Images:

There are tools on my MacBook Pro (and most computers) that can crop and re-size images, and put different frames around them. I have not used such tools here. One such tool is iPhoto. Had I known how to use iPhoto, it would have been helpful. Wang (2009) discusses it in his book, *My new Mac: Snow Leopard*, pages 267-272. (Wang, 2009)

Comical images:

Clearly no small law firm will use most the images in this prototype. A firm can surely select its own images.

Local characteristics:

Google Sites does not allow certain feature changes on a page-by-page basis. My *workaround* was to create a different site for each local section of the Website; this was a total of ten.

URLs:

My trial-&-error led me to create sites for one purpose, then change my mind and use them for another. If you study the URLs you might notice this.

Single & multiple columns:

Single columns are best for the print mode. In some situations, when you print a multi-column page some of the material may overlap. One *workaround* is to insert a textbox in each column and put your text inside the textboxes. You can choose **Print** and then **Open PDF in Preview** and see about how it will look when you print. I used *Verdana* throughout the site and mostly size 10 and 12 for most text that a user might want to print. I think size 10 is best for printing.

Footer:

I found the footer to be contrary at displaying particular colors, notwithstanding my tweaking the *Colors and Fonts*. I discovered I could format something in Microsoft Word and paste that in the footer. This same *workaround* works for other parts of the site.

Sidebar gadgets:

When gadgets are added in the side navigation bar, it is the *ENTIRE PAGE* tool under *Colors & Fonts* that controls the *page link color* and the *page visited link color*. This supersedes what you might try to do in the *SIDEBAR GADGETS* tool; it is quite frustrating. I discovered at least one *workaround*. You can use a Microsoft Word document to trick Google Sites into letting you use a color. You format it in Word and paste it into the site. This is really handy!

Sitemap:

Google Site's *sitemap* only works within each site. Originally I had nine (9) Websites; I created a Website that only has one page and I use it as my Sitemap, giving me a total of ten (10) Websites.

Search:

The search feature only works within each site. There is no *workaround* that I know of for this.

Nested files:

I have nested files in such a way so that the user may only use the *Back button* at the bottom of the page to move back to the next higher level. The hierarchy is apparent in the vertical navigation bar. This might encourage the user to review certain material in sequential order. Also, I think it will help the user be aware of his location with in the Website(s).

Naming sites:

I made numerous errors of *moderate inconvenience* that I would NOT have done if my foresight could have been better. Some of this involved naming a site and later wishing I had named it something else. The only way to give a site a *new* URL is to trash it and start over.

Local and global navigation:

All items in the vertical navigation bar link only to pages of the Website that you are looking at. Items in the horizontal navigation bar link only to the main pages of Websites. The exception is the Sitemap (Website) whose link is in the footer.

Using two Google accounts:

This project required so many separate sites that Google disallowed (at least for a while) any more sites to be created in my first account. So I created them in my other account, then I made my first account an *owner*.

Matching text and background colors:

The Internet has free tools and charts for mixing and matching colors. One such tool is Accessibility Color Wheel. (Mazzocato, n.d.)

Table of contents:

Attorney David A. Breston (n.d.) has a nice table of contents on his Website. I do not (yet) know how to do this. Johnson (2009) posted a instructions for this online which I have not had time to pursue. (Breston, n.d.) (Johnson, 2009)

V. Solution

The solution to the Internet advertising needs of a small firm is to provide a prototype that is cheap, and yet with sufficient quality to address the need. Google Sites is free. Users need no more equipment to access a Google site than any other site. I have found that rankings of such sites are reasonable in Google Searches. This is not necessarily true in other search engines.

This prototype, the methodology, and implementation is to some degree a spinoff of my group's two prior deliverables. Especially some of the concepts of compartmentalization of presentation and context derive from my experience with the group.

It is difficult to explain a time-line of this prototype. I alternated between building the Website, organization of the presentation, organization of the content, and other activities. I alternated between the computer at my home, reading at the Whataburger, reading at the public library.

VI. Benefits

It would be haughty pretend that my prototype will bring new and revolutionary thought to the need at hand. Information Architecture seems to be an incremental creature, with many Information Architects making incremental contributions.

The benefit to the small firm comes down to a tradeoff involving quality of product vs. the time involved, the cost involved, and a firm's available expertise.

Benefits to the Information Architecture community:

This prototype (Website) is open to the public on the Internet. I will likely modify this deliverable and make it available on the Internet also. I will make it easy to find in a *SLIS 5960 UNT* search. This will give other students a model (with its good and poor attributes) to review. Sometimes poor examples are as useful as good ones. (Dean, 2012)

Abbott (2001, p. 265) likens action and causation ("peculiar essential junctures") to "being like arrangements of tumblers in a lock; if an action sits just right under the tumblers, it becomes the key that opens, the agent of sudden advantage or disadvantage." I hope something in this paper can act as a *key* and produce a scintilla of benefit. (Abbott, 2001)

VII. Evaluation of the prototype

Usability testing and surveys would be in order. Also, many firms use their intake process to query callers about their advertising. After a while firms develop a feel about how their clients are attracted, whether from the phone book, the Internet, word of mouth, etc. Perhaps some subsequent SLIS group at UNT will do some validation testing on this or a similar prototype and publish the results. Evaluation is not part of this project, but I just thought I would mention it here.

SLIS students would be an excellent group of testers. They represent an ideal group of potential clients for a small firm. They are well-educated, industrious, computer literate, have stable lifestyles, and the ability pay legal fees.

VIII. Cost

I have never done a Website that I was paid for. It is hard to imagine a real arm's length arrangement where a Webmaster would be paid less than \$200 for a half a day's work, and I am thinking of a solo-practicing Webmaster.

In spite of my work here, it would be extremely difficult to estimate for a law firm how long a project would last and how much it would cost. I simply could not work five days a week, all year, with the same diligence that this project has required. The best I could do would be to agree to work, as long as it takes, for \$X.00 for each half a day. This might not be what a small firm wants to hear.

At this point I have been a jack-of-all-trades in this deliverable. I certainly do not feel outstanding in any particular aspect of the project. To have multiple people working on a Website with some semblance of a *division of labor* would raise the cost a lot; so would renting an office space.

Most of the tools are hosted by Google. I used two Google accounts. I do not know how to use all the tools that Google Sites has. I used my MacBook Pro and Safari as my browser. I needed to know how to use Grab to download images to my computer, mostly *tiff* and a few *jpg* files. (Grab, 2011)

Were a firm to hire me to maintain its Website, I think the best arrangement would be to charge a monthly fee, and to make available a set amount of time each month for the firm. If that time were exceeded, then there would be a per hour fee. I would absorb the cost of the phone, paper, photocopying, etc. As a mediocre jack-of-all-trades, I can understand a small firm not wanting to pay me extra so that I could hire outside expertise. It is difficult to imagine such a project to requiring much travel, but reasonable arrangements could be made.

Conclusion and personal reflections

The amount of trial-and-error is somewhat of an embarrassment, but I suppose a lot of it was necessary. I certainly learned from it. I do not believe any small law firm could justify expending such time.

Some parts of the prototype are not complete. I think it would be good to have a *punishment* section under each area of practice; I realize there would be some overlap; presently *Punishment* only appears under *Sex Crimes*. Also, perhaps there should be a separate global section for *Juveniles vs. Adults*. There is room for improvement; I just ran out of time, but I think I got the *warp and woof* of it.

It is strange how "time horizons" and "turning-points" of Library Science deliverables happen at about the same time, and I am sure Abbott (2001) would agree. (Abbott, 2001)

"... neither the beginning nor the end of a turning point can be defined until the whole turning point has been passed ..."

"This means that turning point analysis makes sense only after the fact, when a new trajectory or system state is clearly established." (Abbott, 2001, p. 250)

I have learned a lot from this project and my work in SLIS 5960. Perhaps this is based on the theory that that you can put more water into an empty bucket than one that is half full.

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Appendix 1.

Configure Navigation

Configure Navigation [X]

Title: ☐ Display title

☐ Automatically organize my navigation

Select pages to show

DWI
Texas DWI
Punishment
Penal Code
Intoxication
Public Intox
Possession
DWI...

[Up] [Down] [Left] [Right] [X]

[Add page](#) [Add URL](#)

Include a link to:

☐ Sitemap ☐ Recent site activity

OK **Cancel**

By using the **Select pages to show** tool (above), I can manipulate my files in any order I want and I can nest them in a hierarchy. Notice that I un-checked **Automatically organize my navigation**.

Appendix 2.

Change site layout

Change site layout ✕

Site width:

☒ use theme default value

☐ Example: 800px or 100%.

Include the following:

☒ **Header**

Height

☐ Use theme default value

☐ Use logo size

☒ pixels

Alignment

Vertical:

Horizontal:

☐ **Horizontal navigation bar**

☒ **Sidebar**

Display

☒ on the left

☐ on the right

Width: pixels

☒ **Footer**

Height

☒ Content determines height

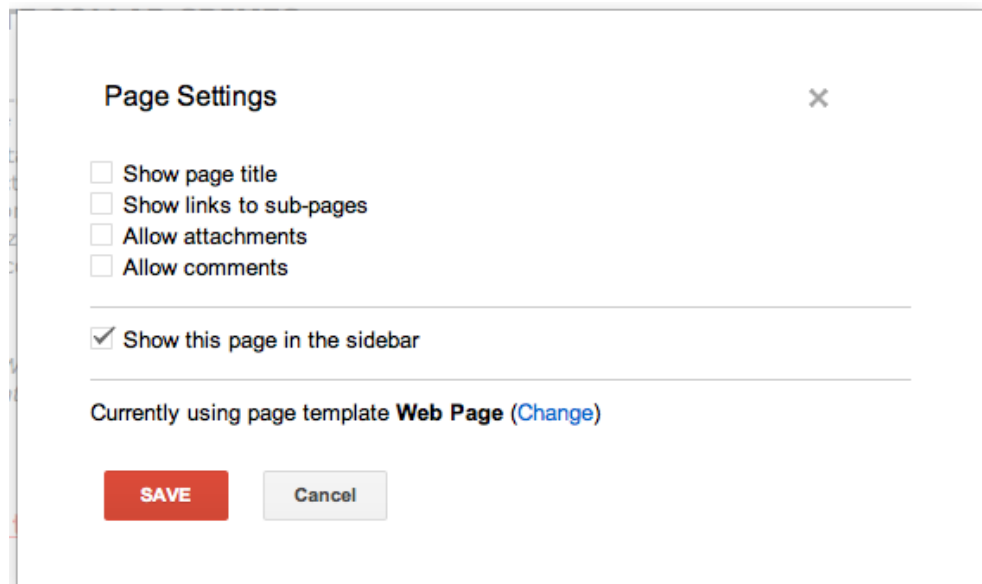
☐ pixels

OK **Cancel**

Notice the Horizontal navigation bar is un-checked. I do not need it because I created my own horizontal navigation bar.

Appendix 3.

Page Settings



Page Settings ✕

- ☐ Show page title
- ☐ Show links to sub-pages
- ☐ Allow attachments
- ☐ Allow comments

☒ Show this page in the sidebar

Currently using page template **Web Page** ([Change](#))

SAVE Cancel

Notice that some features are un-checked. I do not need the system to *show the page title*, because I am putting my own page title where I want it. I do not want *links to sub-pages*, because I want the user to employ the navigation tools that I have put there for him. *Attachments* and *comments* are not needed.

Appendix 4.

Colors and Fonts – Page background color

Manage Site

SAVE Cancel Clear all customizations Browse more themes

< slls5960 White Collar Crimes

Recent site activity
Pages
Attachments
Page templates
Apps Scripts
Deleted items

General
Sharing and Permissions
AdSense
Web Address

Site layout
Colors and Fonts
Themes

Base theme: The base theme allows you to start with an existing theme and make customizations

Rounders

ENTIRE PAGE

Page background color

Page background image

Page wrapper background image

Page font

Page link color

Page visited link color

SITE HEADER

Choose a color:

☐ Use theme default value

☐ None

☒ Custom

#BC7BBC

White Collar Crimes

Home DWI Drugs Assault Theft Sex White Col Rights Philanthropy

White Collar Crimes (Main Page)

Quick Representation
Texas W.C.C.
The Law
Civil Consequences

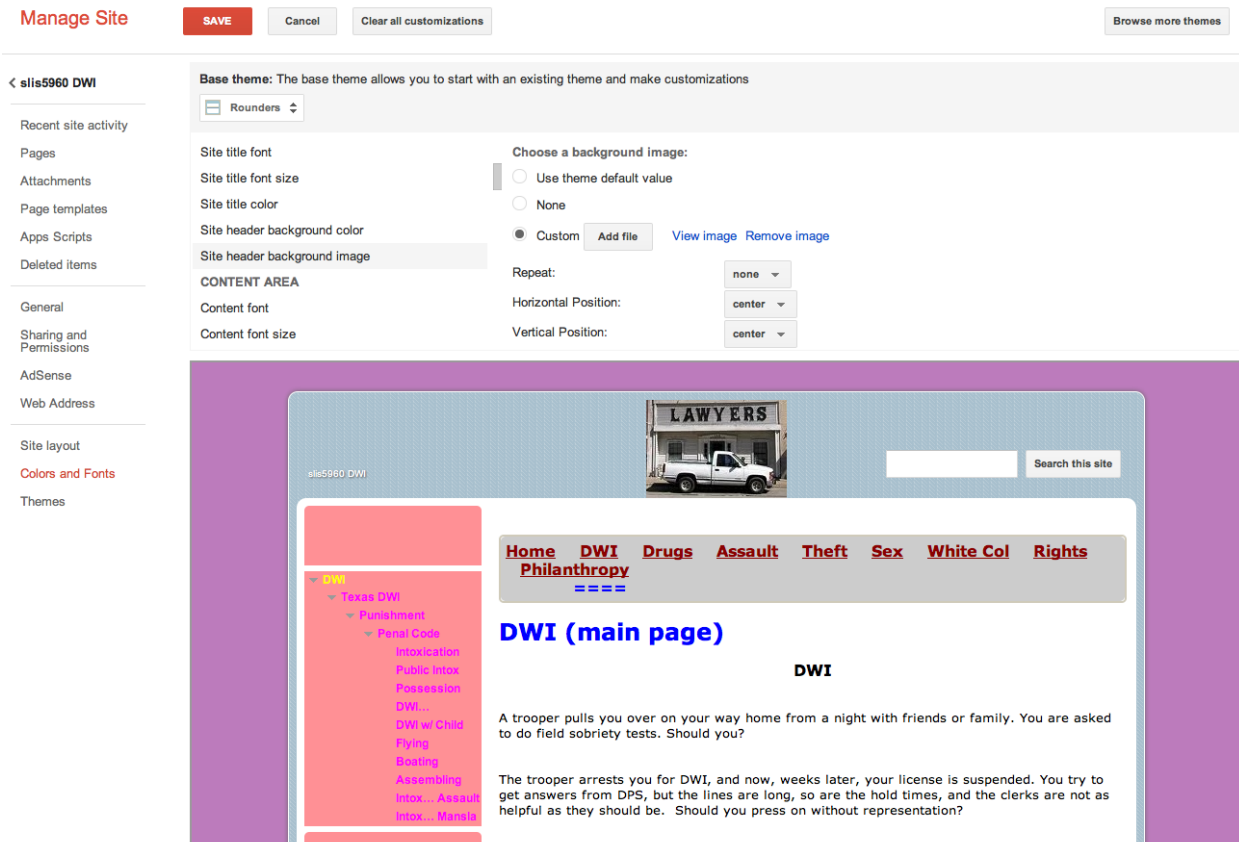
WHITE COLLAR CRIMES

"White-collar crime is a financially motivated, economic, non-violent crime committed for illegal monetary gain. Within the field of criminology, white-collar crime initially was defined by Edwin Sutherland in 1939 as "a crime committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of his occupation" (1939). Sutherland was a proponent of Symbolic Interactionism, and believed that criminal behavior was learned from interpersonal interaction with others. White-collar crime, therefore, overlaps with corporate crime because the opportunity for fraud, bribery, elaborate ponzi schemes, insider trading, embezzlement, computer crime, copyright infringement, money laundering, identity theft, and forgery are more available to white-collar employees."

This is the **Colors and Fonts** tool. It is showing the **Page background color** mode. Notice the Custom color **#BC7BBC**. This is a **lawyer-looking** purple. I had to paste this in, as Google Sites only has 64 colors to choose from. The **Base theme** tool (above) scrolls, but most of the scrolling is not visible.

Appendix 5.

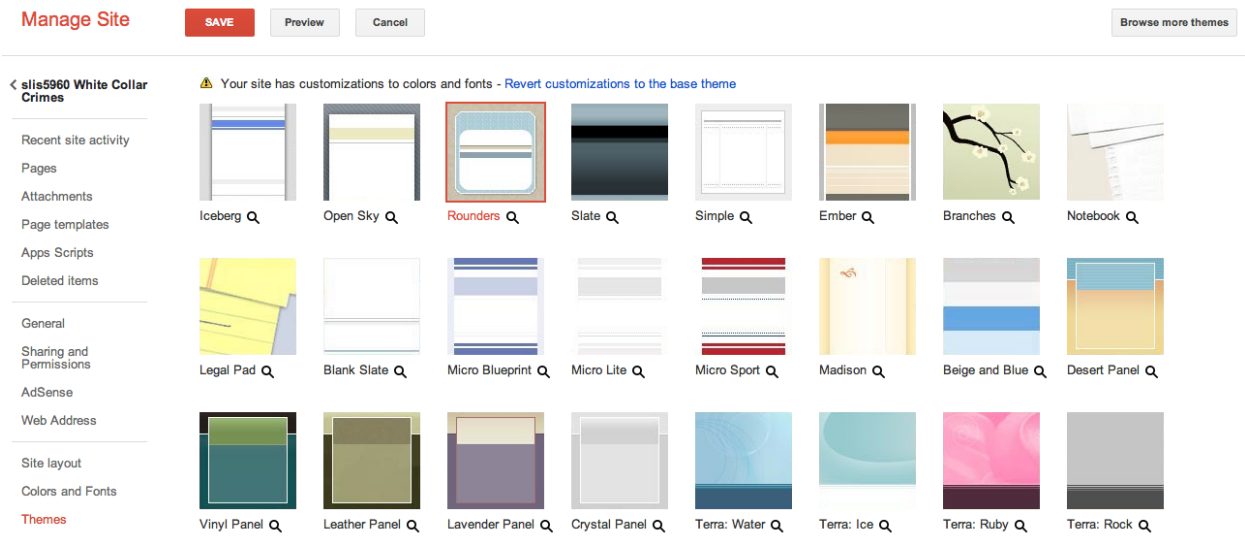
Colors and Fonts — Site header background image.



This is the **Colors and Fonts** tool. It is showing the **Site header background image** mode. I uploaded the image of the office and the pickup truck. The image does not repeat, and it is horizontally centered. The vertical position says **center**, but actually the image and the very small text to its left and the search box to its right are in the bottom position; I made this snapshot before I hit the save button. Again the **Base theme** tool (above) scrolls, with most of the scrolling not visible.

Appendix 6.

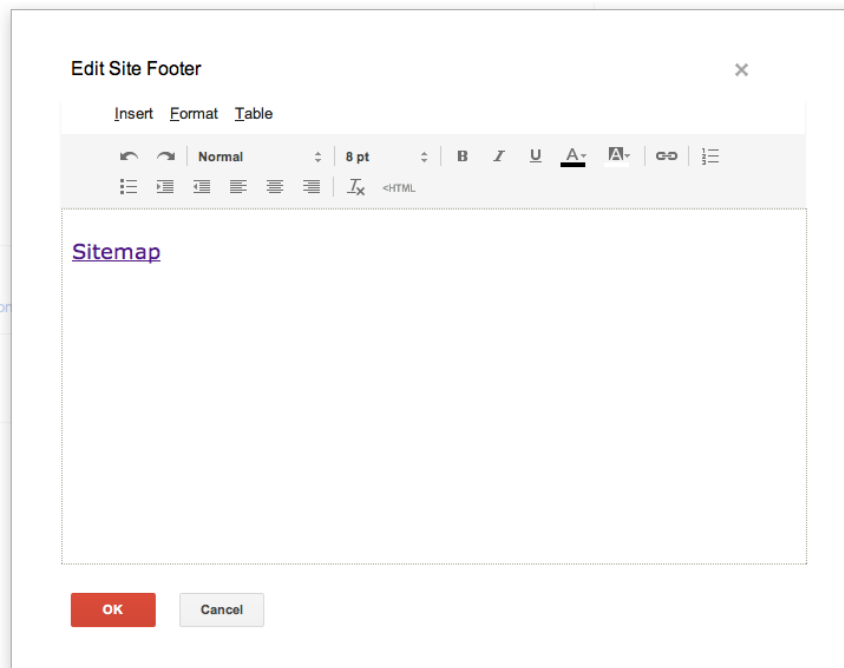
Themes



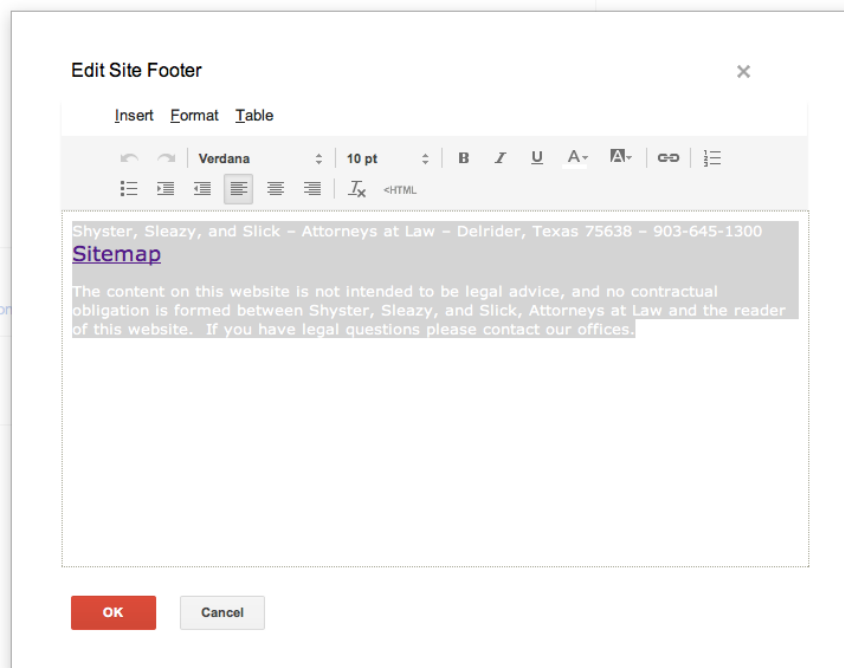
This is the **Themes** mode. It is hard to notice, but I chose **Rounders** (top row, 3rd). Aside from choosing *Rounders*, the Website was built from scratch.

Appendix 7.

Edit Site Footer



The text in the *footer tool* is white (above) except for “Sitemap” which is displayed red.



I have highlighted the text (above) by dragging the cursor through it so you can see it. You can see the same text in the footer of every page in the Website(s).

Appendix 8.

Configure Navigation

Configure Navigation [X]

Title: ☐ Display title

☐ Automatically organize my navigation

Select pages to show

DWI
Texas DWI
Punishment
Penal Code
Intoxication
Public Intox
Possession
DWI...

[Up] [Down] [Left] [Right] [X]

[Add page](#) [Add URL](#)

Include a link to:

☐ Sitemap ☐ Recent site activity

OK **Cancel**

I un-checked to **Display title** and the **Sitemap**. Users know what a *navigation bar* is, so I do not need to a label to remind them of it constantly. I do not need Sitemap because I created my own *sitemap*. I have un-checked **Automatically organize my navigation**; this lets me use the tool (above) to organize my pages the way I want, otherwise items would be in alphabetical order.

Appendix 9.

(Page 1 of 2)

Sitemap with URLs of main pages

Home page of Shyster, Sleazy, and Slick

<https://sites.google.com/site/shystersleazyandslick/>

- About Us
- Contact Us & Map
- Index
- Links
- Practice Areas
- Profile Shyster
- Profile Sleazy
- Profile Slick

DWI (main page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960dwi/>

- Texas DWI
 - Punishment
 - Penal Code
 - Intoxication
 - Public Intox
 - Possession
 - DWI...
 - DWI w/ Child
 - Flying
 - Boating
 - Assembling
 - Intox... Assault
 - Intox... Mansla

Drugs (Main Page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960felonies/>

- Juveniles vs. Adults
- Texas Drug Laws

Assault (Main Page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960misdemeanors/>

- Texas Assault
- Domestic Violence

Theft (Main Page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960theft/>

- Kinds of theft
- Punishment range
- Law of theft

Sex Crimes (main page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960sex/>

- Texas Sex Crimes
- Punishment

Appendix 9
(Page 2 of 2)
Sitemap with URLs of main pages

White Collar Crimes (Main Page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960whitecollarcrimes/>

- Quick Representation
- Texas W.C.C.
- The Law
- Civil Consequences

RIGHTS (Main Page)

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960rights/>

- Rights (main page)
- On the street
- Pulled over
- At your home
- Under arrest
- Expunctions

Philanthropic Endeavors

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960philanthropicendeavors/>

Sitemap

<https://sites.google.com/site/slis5960sitemap/>

The URLs (above) are provided only for the main pages of each Website. I chose not to list the URLs in the Sitemap in the prototype (Website). The reason was to make the user use the browsing buttons on the other pages. I tried to limit the user's choices to actions that will help him be aware of his location within the prototype (Website).

Appendix 10.
(Next 3 pages)
Parameters and Protocols

Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
Change site layout:	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Header is 100 pixels high.								
Alignment vertical is "middle."								
Alignment horizontal is "standard."								
Horizontal navigation bar: Unchecked.								
Sidebar: On the left with 200 pixels wide.								
Footer: Checked with 30 pixels.								
Configure search: Enable search. This site.								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
Sidebar: Width: 200 pixels. Text. Navigation. Text.								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
Colors & fonts:	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Base theme: Rounders.								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
ENTIRE PAGE:								
Page background color: #BC7BBC								
Page background image: None.								
Page wrapper background image: None.								
Page font: Normal.								
Page link color: #8b0000.								
Page visited link color: #ff8f00.								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
SITE HEADER								
Site title font: Normal.								
Site title font size: 12.								
Site title color: #005214.								
Site header background color: Default.								
Site header background image: [image]								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
CONTENT AREA								
Content font: Default.								
Content font size: Default.								
Content text color: Black.								
Content title font: Default.								
Content title font size: 18.								
Content title color: #0000ff Blue.								
Content headers font: Default.								

Content background color: Default.								
Content background image: None.								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
CONTENT AREA GADGETS								
Content gadget title font:								
Content gadget title font size:								
Content gadget font:								
Content gadget text color:								
Content gadget link color:								
Content gadget background color:								
Content gadget header text color:								
Content gadget header background color:								
Content gadget line divider color:								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
SIDEBAR GADGETS								
Sidebar gadget font:								
Sidebar gadget title font:								
Sidebar gadget title font size:								
Sidebar gadget text color:								
Sidebar gadget link color:								
Sidebar gadget background color:								
Sidebar gadget header text color:								
Sidebar gadget header background color:								
Sidebar gadget header background image:								
Sidebar gadget line divider color:								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
NAVIGATION GADGET								
Navigation current page background:								
Navigation current page text color:								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan
HORIZONTAL NAVIGATION								
Horizontal navigation title font:								
Horizontal navigation text color:								
Horizontal navigation hover text color:								
Horizontal navigation background color:								
Horizontal navigation hover background color:								
Horizontal navigation selected text color:								
Horizontal navigation selected background color:								
Home page	DWI	Drugs	Assault	Theft	Sex	White	Rights	Philan

HORIZONTAL NAVIGATION DROPDOWN MENUE								
Horizontal navigation dropdown text color:								
Horizontal navigation background color:								

Using such a chart (at least for a while) could make it easier to keep up with changes to the sites. This could be especially useful with characteristics that differ from site to site.

Appendix 11

Information Architecture Outline from SLIS 5960

- I. The **Research** phase is aimed at understanding the context of which the website will be a part.
[Context, Content, & Users]
 - a. Context (organizational aspects as well as resources such as technology and personnel)
 - i. the environment or organization for the website,
 - ii. the information architecture of the current site (if one exists),
 - iii. the technology available,
 - b. Content
 - i. document types,
 - ii. metadata, &
 - iii. existing structure
 - c. Users or intended audience of the site.
Note: Users (audiences, background, tasks, needs, and information seeking behavior)
- II. In the **Strategy** phase we decide the scope and general guidelines that will guide the project. This is a transition between Research and Design.
- III. In the **Design** phase, we work on the details to document and propose the information architecture of the new site.
 - a. **blueprints** (which specify the **organization** and relation between the elements of the architecture),
 - b. **wireframes** (which deal with the layout and design of the **interface**),
 - c. **metadata** schemas (& controlled vocabulary),
 - d. underlying organization of the **content**.

These above (a,b,c,&d) elements are deliverables from the design that will be used by the graphic designers, programmers, and content creators in the implementation of the website.
- IV. In the **Implementation** phase the proposed design is used to construct the new site.
- V. The **Administration** phase is an ongoing process during the life of the site that includes the daily operation and updating of the site's contents. Evaluation is also a part of the Administration phase. The Administration phase can help to identify potential improvements to the site.

Above is my redacted outline of the User Centered Design (UCD) methodology, the beginning of which derived from page 232 of our *Polar Bear* book. The UCD focuses on an understanding of the users' behaviors and needs. (Morville, Rosenfeld, & Rosenfeld, 2007)
